



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. ASAD ELAHI, SECRETARY STATISTICS, GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN AT THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (New York, 28 February 2007)**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me at the outset congratulate you, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on your re-election as the Chair of the 38th Session of the Statistical Commission. This session assumes special significance as it coincides with the 60th anniversary of the Commission. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and recognize the important contributions that the Commission has made in promoting the improvement of international statistical standards and methods, as well as an internationally comparable statistical system.

The Group of 77 and China attaches great importance to the follow-up and implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, including the MDGs. The international community has made important strides during the past few years in building on the normative framework for global development cooperation established through the commitments made at the major UN summits and conferences.

Unfortunately, implementation remains the unfinished part of the development agenda. Securing the effective and full implementation of the agreed goals and commitments thus continues to be the highest priority of the Group. The development follow up resolution (60/265), adopted by the General Assembly last year, provides a good legislative framework for pursuing a more structured and coherent approach to implementation of the MDGs and the IADGs. Building on Resolution 60/265 the Group underlines the need to evolve an intergovernmental agreement to develop a monitoring mechanism to track and encourage the implementation of goals and commitments.

The Statistical Commission as the intergovernmental focal point for the elaboration, refinement and the review of the implementation indicators has an important role to play in this regard. The Group of 77 and China seeks to strengthen the Commission's mandate as provided by the General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, 60/265 and the Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/6.

In this regard, the G77 and China appreciates the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators presented in the form of the Millennium Development Goals Report, 2006. But as we approach the target year of 2015 for the achievement of the MDGs, there is an urgent need for the Commission and the Expert Group to redouble its efforts to develop a coherent and integrated system of implementation indicators. Such system of indicators needs to be based on intergovernmental consensus, and should give a clear and complete sense of progress on the implementation of the all MDGs and IADGs. We call upon the Commission to gear up its work to that end.

The Statistical Commission should review the indicators used by UNDAF and Common Country Assessment and make decisions with a view to reaching intergovernmental consensus on indicators.

The goal of developing indicators for monitoring MDGs outcomes would depend on the scaling up of national statistical capacities. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium

Development Goals Indicators has made statistical capacity one of its top priority areas of work. The Expert Group meeting in November 2006 has stressed the need of building national statistical capacities as a way to overcome the shortcomings in the availability and quality of data to monitor the MDGs.

It is important that the existing initiatives for developing national capacities and agency-country coordination and consultations be made more effective on the basis of national demands and priorities. The United Nations Statistical Division should tailor its statistical capacity-building programme to strengthen the institutional statistical capacities of countries on the basis of national demands and action priorities. The partner agencies and donors need to increase financial assistance for national statistical capacity building. As recommended by the Expert Group, the Statistical Division should accelerate its efforts in this regard.

We would also like to reiterate that the international institutions including donor agencies should take the data of the national statistical organizations for their analysis rather than impute data on their own.

On behalf of the Group of 77 & China, I assure you Mr. Chairman of our continued support to the Commission in achieving these goals.

**I thank you.**